



Got Sleep? An Investigation of the Sleep Problem at the University of Dayton

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Abstract

After talking with UD students, we found that most are not aware of the effects that poor sleep creates in their lives. We determined more can be done at UD to raise awareness of the benefits of sleep. We created a document to provide a way for students to self-assess how healthy their sleeping patterns are as well as provide information on health issues related to sleep deprivation.

Problem

Sleep is a universal issue as it affects students of all majors and classes. We believe that this is a serious issue for college students because in the stressful atmosphere that college presents, there are often times when students do not get enough sleep. This can lead to negative impacts on their health along with their memory and learning.

Method

We reviewed resources on sleep currently available at UD. We also examined resources available at the University of Georgia and the University of Michigan for comparison. Finally, we conducted interviews with students at UD.

References

- "Basics About Sleep." CDC. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 4 May 2017, https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/index.html. Accessed 20 Feb 2018.
- "Sleep." *Campus Mind Works*. University of Michigan, 2003, http://campusmindworks.org/students/self_care/sleep.asp. Accessed 20 Feb 2018.
- "Sleep and Memory." *Sleep and Memory | Need Sleep*, WGBH Educational Foundation, healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/need-sleep/whats-in-it-for-you/memory. Accessed 20 Feb 2018.
- "Sleep Rocks! ...Get more of it!" *University Health Center | Managing Stress | Sleep* University Health Center | University of Georgia University Health Center, www.uhs.uga.edu/sleep/.

Result

Both UGA and UM provided easily accessible online information addressing the importance of sleep, the benefits of sleep, and connections between sleep and better academic performance and mental health. UD does not offer any online resources on the topic. In the health center, there are two brochures detailing the mechanics of sleep, sleep issues such as sleep apnea, and tips for how to get a good night's sleep. The health center and counseling center can also offer support through therapy and medication.

Method of Revision

We changed our brochure so that it was more relatable to college students by adding pictures of UD and making sections that were specifically addressed to problems faced by college students. We also chose to simplify the health document by highlighting the importance of sleep to a student's health, rather than discussing the physiology of sleep. This will help to ensure that the document is more effective because it will raise awareness to the relationship between health and sleep as well as provide real solutions and tips that students can apply to improve their sleeping patterns.

Recommendations

UD should implement more online resources as college students are likely to look online for resources. UD should also update their pamphlets that are currently available in the health/counseling center for those students who do decide to look for on campus resources. Sleep is not advertised as a problem on campus and we agree that UD should do more to inform students on the issue and publicize the resources available.

Revised Brochure:

Better Sleep Tips:

- 7-9 hours
- Go to sleep and wake up at the same time everyday
- No electronics 10+ minutes before going to sleep
- Avoid caffeine after midday
- "Dumping your brain" when troubling thoughts keep you up
- Plan your sleep schedule with apps such as "bedtime"

Sleep on our UD campus:

We talked with UD students of various majors and this is what they thought is keeping our campus from getting adequate sleep:

- Everyday life
- Heavy class load
- Clubs and extracurricular involvement
- Homework / projects
- Sports
- Social Life
- Finals week

GOT SLEEP:
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Why is sleep important?

- It allows your body to repair and restore
- It strengthens memory and learning
- It helps to regulate mood and stress
- Adequate sleep helps strengthen your immune system
- Sleeping helps maintain a healthy weight

HOW WELL DO YOU SLEEP? SLEEP SURVEY
Take a look at this survey to see how well you are sleeping.
(Adapted from the National Sleep Foundation)

1. Have you unintentionally fallen asleep in a class in the past 2 weeks?
☐ Yes (2) ☐ No (1)
2. Have you nodded off or fallen asleep behind the wheel of a car in the past 2 weeks?
☐ Yes (2) ☐ No (1)
3. How many times in the past two weeks did you get 7 to 8 hours of sleep?
☐ All or Most of the days (1)
☐ Less than half of the days (2)
4. Have friends, professors or coworkers told you that you look sleepy in the past 2 weeks?
☐ Yes (2) ☐ No (1)
5. How many times in the past two weeks did you wake up feeling totally refreshed?
☐ All or Most of the days (1)
☐ Less than half of the days (2)

Add up the numbers next to the answers that you put in the survey.
Score: 7 or higher (You need more sleep!)
Score: 6 and below (You are sleeping fine!)

The content and design of this brochure were designed to be more relevant for UD students seeking resources on the issue of sleep.